*Abstract - Sound Words: Hymns in Twentieth Century Literature*

Why, in the twentieth century, do atheist or agnostic authors write so many hymns into their poems and novels? This essay contends that attending to the frequent-but-overlooked hymn-episodes in early- to mid-twentieth-century literature, and to their historical contexts, can complicate our understanding of literary postures of faith, and of everyday sounds as 'filler' in modernist literature. Focusing on Stevie Smith and D. H. Lawrence, with reference to a range of other writers, it draws on unpublished archival material to argue that hymn-history reveals an alternative narrative to that of religious writing as conservative, and literary writing as radical. Hymn-compilers often sought modernity, while poets and novelists tended to privilege older, more dated hymns. This ideological clash led to a literary approach which defiantly accommodated 'bad old hymns' through nostalgic reminiscence and extensive quotation. Used in this way, hymn oscillates between a status as textual padding and as focal point: an embarrassingly excessive and solid substance which nevertheless enables embarrassment to be discharged. Ultimately, the muffling, ostensibly authoritative substance of hymn, in twentieth-century literature, fills up gaps in which too much might resound or be revealed: it offers literary writing an opportunity to accommodate and neutralize awkwardness, failure and error.

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In October 1951, the ninety-one-year-old William Ralph Inge – formerly Dean Inge of St Paul's – reviewed the new *BBC Hymn Book* in the *Evening Standard*. With broadcast services now a staple of the schedules, the BBC had designed this innovative new text especially so that listeners could follow along with the hymns. Inge approved of the book's modernity in one respect: its judicious omissions of outdated hymns which 'gloat over the torments of the damned', such as 'Days and moments quickly flying'. Others, he felt, had become uselessly obscure. John Keble's 'The Moon above, the Church below, a wondrous race they run' is meaningless enough to be completed with a line of flippant parody: '"But what we all should like to know is which of them has won?" (Latest betting, three to two on the Moon.)'[1]

Inge's frivolity goaded the poet Stevie Smith (1902-1971), usually a great admirer of the venerable Dean,[2] to write hotly to the novelist John Cowper Powys:

> [redacted][3]

The episode involves a startling role-reversal. Dean Inge's sense of humour is not usually this good; Stevie Smith's sense of humour – normally quick, shameless and irreverent – is not usually this poor.[4] Smith takes offence at Inge's horseplay with hymn, but her own response to 'old hymns' depends just as strongly on a playful treatment of language. '[redacted]', she marvels. The word becomes a shapeless handful of fur, to be enjoyed sensuously – and uncomprehendingly. '[redacted]''s dated, inflammatory signification vanishes, Smith pretends, from the discussion: as though there is no (racist) reason for her association of '[redacted]' with '[redacted]'. What matters, Smith argues, is how the word looks and feels to

her. And this emphasis on sensation indicates Dean Inge's primary *faux pas* as far as Smith is concerned: his tin-earedness in at all attending to or believing what the hymns are actually saying.

Smith was forty-nine when she wrote this (unpublished) letter. But if Inge's article handles hymn like a sniggering schoolboy, Smith implies that she receives hymn like a much younger child. Meaning does not matter: only form, and the bodily experience it offers. This childish-yet-lasting incomprehension, privileging sound over sense, is built into the history of hymns. In her introduction to *The Child's Christian Year* (1841), Frances M. Yonge wrote:

> The first impression on looking over this little book, will probably be that the hymns are too difficult … if we observe the Church's method of teaching, we shall find that she places in the memories of her young members a form of sound words, the full understanding of which neither they nor their teachers can arrive at.[5]

Comprehension, for Yonge, does not matter so long as the words are 'sound': orthodox, free from error, established on stable moral grounds. Like small, sealed treasures, the Church and its hymns aim to '[place] in the memories' words and phrases which the child will only understand later. Until then, soundness occasions impenetrability, like good solid wood which has no give. What remains, Smith agrees, a century later, is precisely the 'sound' of the words. '[redacted]' is a 'soft word' because of its lisping 'th', its bouncy terminal 'n'. Smith throws the words of the hymn from hand to hand, without penetrating into their meaning. She leaves the text, in other words, unsounded.

How does hymn sound, or resound, in twentieth-century literature? It echoes through some of modernism's most hallowed halls. 'The Holy City', for instance, offers a touchpoint in James Joyce's *Stephen Hero* (c. 1903-5);[6] hymns wander into Woolf and Waugh and Auden and Aldous Huxley and Dorothy Richardson. They assume quite a size, as this essay will show, in the work of D. H. Lawrence and Stevie Smith. Does the literary recurrence of hymn signify its importance – or does its constancy turn it into wallpaper, along with the snippets of advertising, popular songs, cliché and literary quotation which comprise the beloved textual clutter of this period? Is hymn a pleasant background gabble, or a kind of text which these authors 'sound' in some way: penetrate or inhabit?

This essay traces how and why twentieth-century literature often moves hymn in and out of 'soundness' and solidity. Its implications are threefold. Firstly, watching how hymn behaves in literature of the period complicates our sense of how 'filler' works, or might work, in writing which seeks to depict the everyday: a key concern of modernist literature, and a source of increasing interest to literary critics.[7] Hymn flickers between solidity and insubstantiality, between a status as filler and as key event. At one moment it offers an emotional and narrative turning-point; at another, it fades into the background as characters are lulled to sleep. Hymn oscillates, in other words, between significance and insignificance. And that movement offers the basis for this essay's second claim: that watching hymn's movement in and out of 'soundness' helps illuminate the complicated religious feelings of writers who half-believed, or moved in and out of belief. Lawrence and Smith puddle-jump between postures of belief and disbelief, using hymn to playact faith in a way that calls the intellectual safety of 'playacting' into doubt. Hymn offers a language beyond that of 'hypocrisy' or 'contradiction' to explain these trajectories. Thirdly, by foregrounding the twentieth-century history of hymn, this essay reveals hymn-compilers to be unexpectedly

radical, and literary writers unexpectedly conservative, about hymn. By doing so, it illuminates a specific demand on hymns, in twentieth-century literature, to be a predictable, containing, muffling space. Despite ambivalence and suspicion about religion, writers tend not to want to resist hymn: 'resist' in either sense, as one might resist an invading army, or as one might resist a sugary treat. Hymn offers a space not for radical innovation, but for the covert, and not unimportant, energies of naughtiness. It leaves transgressions unnoticed or forgiven: offering an almost imperceptible, recurring rhythm, which gives these texts shape.

*Filler or Thriller*

Hymn existed, for years, in a renegade relationship to the religious establishment. Its origins in the eighteenth-century nonconformist church meant that it still bears the traces of the church's more radical wing.[8] Hymn remained subject to disapproval from conservative churches for much of the nineteenth century,[9] and the Anglican church did not formally assimilate hymnody until the publication of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1861.[10] The book marked a turning point for hymns, which began to receive a warmer representation in both literature and society,[11] until more hymns were being written than poetry.[12] Hymns transcended social divisions: Alisa Clapp-Itnyre describes how many of the same hymns were sung by children from all classes, on streetcorners and in the nursery.[13] The form therefore represented a near-universal childhood experience for writers born in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, becoming an interwar and postwar literary trope.[14] For writers, hymns offered an early point of contact with poetic language, structure and metre. Brought up in High Anglicanism, W. H. Auden positions hymns as his earliest poetic training:

> I began writing poetry myself because one Sunday afternoon in March 1922, a friend suggested that I should: the thought had never occurred to me. I scarcely knew any poems – *The English Hymnal*, the Psalms, *Struwwelpeter* and the mnemonic rhymes in *Kennedy's Shorter Latin Primer* are about all I remember … [15]

Auden does not list the poems he knew, but those he 'remember[s]'. Invoking mnemonic rhymes places an emphasis on texts which are *deliberately coded for memorability.* The first of these is *The English Hymnal.* Hymns, to adopt Yonge's language in her introduction to *The Child's Christian Year*, have been 'place[d]' successfully in Auden's memory: its 'sound words' lasting, like well-wearing fabrics, into adulthood.

D. H. Lawrence, who left Congregationalism certainly by the age of twenty-two (although he claimed to have rejected Christianity by sixteen),[16] nevertheless reminisced warmly about hymns towards the end of his life. In a letter to Gertrude Cooper on 23 January 1927, Lawrence's nostalgia for Congregationalist hymns protrudes from beneath an air of contemptuous sophistication when he remarks: 'I suppose they're warbling away in Eastwood Congregational Chapel at this minute! Do you remember, how we all used to feel so sugary about the vesper verse: Lord keep us safe this night, secure from all our fears –?'[17] His essay 'Hymns in a Man's Life' (1928) describes how 'the hymns which I learned as a child … mean to me almost more than the finest poetry, and they have for me a more permanent value, somehow or other.'[18] Permanency and lastingness emerge, again, as important. The stamp that they left on Lawrence's poetic language comes into relief in certain of his poems: Duncan McGuffie notes how 'Stand up!' in *Pansies* (1929) echoes the hymn 'Stand up! stand up for Jesus!',[19] and John Hoyles identifies the influence of Ebenezer Elliot's Chartist hymn 'When wilt thou save the people?' on Lawrence's 'When wilt thou

teach the people –?'[20] Often, however, Lawrence's love of hymns positions them as an idiosyncratic literary space, preserving his early incomprehension. In 'Hymns in a Man's Life', he locates wonder in the words' impenetrable soundness: 'The Lake of Galilee! I don't want to know where it is. I never want to go to Palestine.'[21] 'The Lake of Galilee' operates like Coleridge's Xanadu: a sealed, mysterious, sensuously experienced word which holds no referential meaning. Words are heard but not understood or attended to: allowed simply to remain form, bundles of unpicked connotation which grandly take up space.

Lawrence's attitude to hymn language echoes Yonge's and Wilson's Victorian approach to sophisticated hymn-language, where the shape and 'feel' of words take priority over their meaning, and prefigures the method which Stevie Smith advises for education in her essay 'At School' (1966):

> [redacted][22]

Ambivalence towards her childhood Anglicanism, and God, resounds through Smith's work; she writes of the '[redacted] ' and laments '[redacted]'[23] Like Lawrence, Smith is suspicious of Christianity but delighted by hymns: she indicated that several of her poems were to be sung to hymn-tunes**,** such as her poem 'To the Tune of the Coventry Carol'.[24] Not only do hymns pervade her writing, but, as 'At School' makes clear, so does the approach to language which hymn demands: where form and content become ingrained in the mind so early and strongly that the text is 'known' before it can ever be attentively listened to. Hymn, for authors like Smith and Lawrence, becomes a form which can be heard and enjoyed, but not necessarily attended to, contemplated or understood.

Since the characters of twentieth-century literature cannot fully register hymn, as they go about their lives, the form shifts into the periphery of their attention. Without being engaged with, pondered, put to rest, hymn circulates as half-read remnant. This waste survives, therefore, as the junk of a cultural loft: too nostalgic to discard, but attracting no more than the occasional affectionate glance. Escaping the 'recycling' that modernist reworkings might offer, hymn lingers on, both unused and unspent.

This status as hoarded rubbish – half-treasure, half-irritant; a precious childhood relic which nevertheless takes up space and trips you up – means that hymn offers ideal material for 'filler', the everyday experiences to which, as Rita Felski points out, literature pays minute attention.[25] Liesl Olson describes how modernism foregrounds the filler and makes it autonomous,[26] a focus which John Whittier-Ferguson discusses specifically in terms of language when he notes how Woolf's late fiction uses 'catch-phrases, clichés, conversational filler, recycled parts of other books…'.[27] In *Between the Acts* (1941), lines from literary texts and social niceties keep the conversations going. But these are lines minimally acceptable in the social circles that Woolf likes to describe: quoting those would meet with basic assent, if not admiration of one's ingenuity. Quoting lines from a hymn in conversation might be less likely: think of Mrs Ramsay's annoyance in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), where she catches herself murmuring – even to herself – 'We are in the hands of the Lord'.[28]

Banished from even this social status as conversational filler, traditional hymn takes up residence in modernist novels as mental filler: the business of a mind in a holding-pattern, stuff to chew over in an unoccupied moment. In Dorothy Richardson's *The Tunnel* (1919), the protagonist Miriam rises early to ride her bicycle. In her mind, elated and loosened by tiredness, snippets of hymn mingle:

> Last night's soapy water poured away, and the fresh poured out ready standing there all night, everything ready. . . . I must not forget the extra piece of string. . . . Je-ru-sa-*lem* the Gol-den, with-milk-and-hun-ny—blest. . . . Sh, not so much noise . . . beneath thy con, tem, *pla*, tion, sink, heart, and, voice, o, ppressed.
>
> I *know* not, oh, I, *know*, not.
>
> Sh—Sh . . . hark hark my soul angelic songs are swelling O'er earth's green fields, and ocean's wave-beat shore . . . damn—blast where are my bally knickers? Sing us sweet fragments of the songs above.[29]

Miriam observes, delights, plans, worries; and 'Jerusalem the Golden' inserts itself, an earworm, in the gaps between her thoughts. Her mind bangs the song out, separating the syllables with finicky emphasis; even as its imagery of bliss mirrors her excited anticipation, the song itself is handled violently, deconstructed into rhythm. The monosyllables punctuate her preparations: hammered into packing-peanuts to fill the empty spaces of her mind.

Old things can be smashed up in this way: well-known, they can be abused because they are felt to be everlasting, predictable, impossible to use up. Miriam could not dismember an avant-garde poem in this way, to use casually as mental packaging. To meet these needs, hymn must remain stable. It is this desire for hymn as a reliable substance that underlies Smith's criticism of Dean Inge. The irony in this conservative stance is that hymn was, in the early twentieth-century, moving in the opposite direction. As the literature of the early- to mid-century reworked the conventions of poetry and prose, writers like Smith and Lawrence nevertheless insisted that familiar hymns should be retained (sung in a certain way, sung without comprehension) – even as hymn itself was trying to modernize. Vaughan Williams'

*The English Hymnal* (1906), *Songs of Praise* (1925) and *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928) formed part of a revival of hymn and folk song which ran until the 1930s,[30] in which Williams spent ten years collecting folk songs and setting hymns to their tunes.[31] This reinvention and freshening seemed frequently to be conceived as a trimming of devotional dead wood – 'sound words' like oak, perhaps, which have withered and lost their strength – during which even traditional hymns received sharp scrutiny. In their preface to *Songs of Praise*, for instance, the editors consider it 'a hopeful sign that all our recent hymnals have shown courage in replacing many weak and poor hymns, by words and music more worthy of our great traditions … Some courage in omission will indeed be a necessary part of the religious recovery for which the Churches look'.[32] This same emphasis on cutting out unsuitable texts underpins the *BBC Hymn Book*, twenty-six years later; its preface traces the book's origins back to a remark from Dr F. A. Iremonger (whose name wonderfully predicts Smith's later response), 'Director of Religion' at the BBC in 1937, 'that an effort should be made to compile a book in which the 'good popular' might be preserved and the 'bad popular' omitted.'[33] Reviewing this book, Dean Inge approved both the principle and its execution. Hymn was determinedly bringing itself up-to-date: making itself, contrary to its appeal for many writers in this period, sensible, audible, comprehensible and justifiable.

Smith and Lawrence – two writers markedly uninterested in being sensible, comprehensible or justifiable – resist this tendency by making ample space for the bad old hymns in their writing: hoarding and displaying the outdated 'dead wood' which is no longer allowed into the hymn-books. As hymn compilers try to develop the genre, then – to make it fresh and newly assimilable for its singers – Smith and Lawrence make room in their writing for hymns which, in Inge's phrase, gloat over torments: they match the lurid and excessive sentiments of these texts by accommodating them expansively in their own writing. In her essay 'The

Necessity of Not Believing', Smith pauses her narrative to present two full verses of 'Pange Lingua':

[redacted][34]

The recitation is proud; Smith relishes the opportunity to keep readers waiting patiently as she displays her knowledge. She announces that she will 'say' the hymn – not sing it, or write it out – like a child doing a monotonous performance for yawning relatives, indifferent to their boredom. Minimally annotated, the hymn's primary function here is to take up space, a gesture of poetic excess. Smith forces it to be solid and sound. And in doing so, she exempts it from analysis or penetration; the hymn sings itself right through before either its singer or listener has a chance to meditate on its content. Once one starts singing a hymn, it compels one to continue. Hymn draws you on to its musical track: each verse repeats the same tune, pulling the congregation quickly into the same boat, and preparing even those who do not know the song to join in as quickly as possible. It sings itself on to the end, filling up its necessary space; there is no room, in this model, for thoughtful silences and digestion of its words. This singing-on is, in fact, often prescribed for stubborn or persistent earworms: the scraps of song which hammer their way invasively into the mind, as Miriam experiences in *The Tunnel*. Oliver Sacks describes how one may deal with an earworm by 'consciously singing or playing it to the end of the song, so that it is no longer a fragment circling round and round, incapable of resolution'.[35] D. H. Lawrence's late essay, 'Hymns in a Man's Life' (1928) offers up hymn after hymn with a detail which suggests the same desire to sing something to rest:

Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,

> It is not night if Thou be near--
>
> That was the last hymn at the board school. It did not mean to me any Christian dogma or any salvation. Just the words, 'Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,' penetrated me with wonder and the mystery of twilight. At another time the last hymn was:
>
> Fair waved the golden corn
> In Canaan's pleasant land--
>
> And again I loved 'Canaan's pleasant land'. The wonder of 'Canaan', which could never be localised.[36]

Lawrence recites lavishly here; in the draft of the essay, he quoted even more extensively, offering a full verse of the hymn.[37] Both he and Smith relish hymn's inclination to fill up space. It offers a chance to engage, briefly and indulgently, in an activity which is understood – because no one supposedly believes what it explicitly says – to be pointless.

*Play and Faith*

Hymn is indulgence, then: a messy and larger-than-life form, to be enjoyed half-secretly, beyond the notice of polite society. Ever since Samuel Johnson deemed devotional poetry like the hymns of Isaac Watts 'unsatisfactory',[38] hymn has been associated with poor or tasteless writing, shuffling between the cliché and the over-egged. Famously, Tennyson considered that a good hymn needed to be 'commonplace and poetical', arguing that as soon as a hymn-

writer introduced an uncommon or original thought, his text ceased to be a hymn.[39] And Auden admitted, in his essay 'Postscript: Christianity and Art' (1962), that although he retained 'sentimental associations' with many hymns, he found only a few 'poetically tolerable'.[40]

This ambivalence about whether hymns were really in good taste underpins Inge's 1951 review. He acknowledges, slightly snootily, that the question of what should be done about 'luscious sentimental hymns which are unpleasing to persons of good taste, but agreeable to many simple minds' is a difficult one.[41] Inge's word 'luscious' implies, in the Oxford English Dictionary, 'a kind of 'sweetness' not strictly in accordance with good taste.'[42] Not without taste but a one-note sweetness. Too much sugar sickens the refined palate, but delights children and the vulgar. The description echoes Lawrence's feeling 'so sugary about the vesper verse' as a child,[43] and Louis MacNeice's description, in *The Strings are False: An Unfinished Autobiography* (1965), of how the hymns in church 'made me feel like crying, in a rather pleasant sugary way.'[44] These hymns are too sweet for adults; Inge's tone is ambivalent, but Lawrence and MacNeice audibly re-inhabit their childhood pleasure in this moment of description. The sugary hymn glitters, embarrassingly enticing.

Sweetness and guilty pleasures often sit in opposition to seriousness. The difficulty is that hymn is meant, and means, to be serious. Unlike nursery rhymes or folk songs, or the 'mnemonic rhymes' which Auden recalled – forms with which it shares much, formally and connotatively – hymn is not generally considered 'trivial', and often reproves triviality; it is not meant to be sung for holiday or play, but as a kind of (spiritual) labour. In his introduction to John Betjeman's *Slick but Not Streamlined* (1947), Auden balances this contradictory status of hymn when he describes how Betjeman's poems are among the texts which have

‘formed [his] personal vision of the public world’. These books also include *Hymns Ancient and Modern* ‘(with tunes)’, as well as the novels of Ronald Firbank and a Victorian treatise on plumbing.[45] Where do play and seriousness operate here? The camp and the banal mingle, bathetically, with the grand ‘sound words’ of hymn. In this company, hymns become both as instrumental as plumbing and as frivolous as Firbank’s *Valmouth* (1919): a book in which religion, via some especially idiosyncratic practices, itself becomes decorative and absurd, seriously but kinkily conducted in the spaces between Firbank’s gossipy dialogues.[46] By building Auden’s ‘personal vision of the public world’, hymns allow humour and solemnity, superfluous ornateness and purposefulness, to become concomitant. Auden is not making fun of hymns, even when he notes in his introduction, of Betjeman, ‘It is difficult to write seriously about a man one has sung hymns with.’[47] Hymns are serious work, and that, Auden hints, is exactly why one cannot write or think seriously about someone one has sung hymns with: a recording of Auden and Stevie Smith singing hymns together at the 1965 Edinburgh Festival shows them enjoying each other’s lovable absurdity, in their postures of concentration.[48] The opposite of seriousness, here, is perhaps not foolishness but intimacy. Writing seriously demands a resumption of formality, distance and objectivity, but hymn-singing has broken these down: through humour, in part, but also through an episode of mutual, if unarticulated, knowledge. As hymn singers sing side by side, in a posture of solemnity, Christian theology becomes only peripherally relevant, in favour of a mutual tenderness.

Such potential for exposure – laying out and temporarily reassuming childhood sentiments, postures and values – means that hymn is often embarrassing. It demands sincerity from its singer in a way that nursery rhyme cannot accommodate; one could sing a hymn jokingly, but one could not sing a nursery rhyme sincerely. Hymn offers twentieth-century writers, in other

words, a space for earnest rendition, even briefly assumed; it is this momentary sincerity, this inhabitable posture of devotion, which distinguishes the literary capacities of hymn from other traditional forms of song and poetry. In its excess to narrative, it offers an opportunity to occupy stances of dedication and focused piety, with both the seriousness and the irreverence of a child's playacting. Lawrence's sister, Ada, recalled how the same balance of stern rigidity and jocularity, pastiche and parody, sprang out on a walk to Wingfield Manor in 1905:

> We took the train to Alfreton, and Bert [Lawrence], who liked old buildings, said we must look round the church. He took a great deal of interest in architecture. But when we saw the Easter decorations, masses of daffodils, narcissus and Lent Lillies, he said we must sing a hymn or two, and threatened awful punishments if anyone laughed or treated the occasion lightly. I played the organ and we sang. After the boys had explored the belfry we set off for Wingfield.[49]

Lawrence enters the church as an architectural enthusiast, but turns abruptly into a congregational leader. His pose is severely didactic but also facetious, a spur-of-the-moment response to seeing the overflow of bright decorations in the church. After the hymn, in Ada's account, follows casual exploration and departure for Wingfield. The incident is both extremely serious and of no account at all; enjoyable, like sugar, but empty calories. Lawrence sincerely (and perhaps tediously) occupied the hymn-space, and then easily left it behind.

This puddle-jumping between performance and abandonment, inhabitation and desertion, sincere feeling and a sudden change of subject, enacted by these writers both in their lives

and in their texts, points to a particular relationship to faith. Lawrence may not believe in the religion of his childhood, but – when he stands up halfway through a train journey, as Achsah Barlow Brewster recalls, to sing the hymn 'Throw out the life-line' complete with gestures, tossing an imaginary lasso to imaginary drowning souls – he inhabits the postures of faith.[50] Faith (as opposed to belief) requires play: it is propelled by the forces of laughter, embarrassment and incredulity. Something cannot be so, and yet it is. While belief is cerebral or intellectual assent to an idea, faith involves embodying a posture, a solid or sound shape – taking a leap – trusting that the risk will pay off, undeservedly and impossibly.[51] Writing in defence of nonsense, G. K. Chesterton thinks that religious wonder is underpinned by the *arbitrariness* of its performances:

> So long as we regard a tree as an obvious thing, naturally and reasonably created for a giraffe to eat, we cannot properly wonder at it. It is when we consider it as a prodigious wave of the living soil sprawling up to the skies *for no reason in particular* that we take off our hats…[my italics][52]

The very excess and pointlessness of the tree's thrusting heavenwards, its dramatic and inexplicable posture of faith, invites a responding posture of faith: Chesterton takes off his hat. Faith involves an orientation, a serious inhabitation or performance of a posture. When Auden sings hymns with Betjeman and Lawrence stands to throw out the life-line in a moving train, they understand the risk they are taking: they embody vulnerability, susceptibility to ridicule and embarrassment, as they put themselves in impossible (physical and intellectual) positions.

These are the postures which shock, embarrass and delight Anna in Lawrence's *The Rainbow* (1915), when she hears her cousin whole-heartedly singing a hymn:

> She *wished* he would not say the responses so plainly. It diverted her from her vague enjoyment. Why would he obtrude, and draw notice to himself? It was bad taste. But she went on all right till the hymn came. He stood up beside her to sing, and that pleased her. Then suddenly, at the very first word, his voice came strong and over-riding, filling the church. He was singing the tenor. Her soul opened in amazement. His voice filled the church! It rang out like a trumpet, and rang out again. She started to giggle over her hymn-book. But he went on, perfectly steady. Up and down rang his voice, going its own way. She was helplessly shocked into laughter … She was amazed, and rather enjoyed it. And still the hymn rolled on, and still she laughed.[53]

It is Will's very sincerity, in singing the hymn strongly and steadily, which amazes Anna into laughter. His clear participation in the church's rituals, singing 'lustily and with a good courage' as John Wesley commanded Methodists in his *Select Hymns: with Tunes Annext* (1761), seems to her in 'bad taste'.[54] We hear, again, echoes of the luscious, unmixed and too-intense. And yet this embarrassing episode kickstarts the erotics of their relationship: Will's performance of faith creates the conditions in which another sort of faith, another kind of leap, might become possible.

Hymn, then embarrasses its singers – too sincere, too sugary – but it also brazens out that embarrassment. For Smith and Lawrence, hymn acquires its own momentum as soon as one begins singing it; its insistent tune and metre, and its Pavlovian embeddedness in memory, carry its singer through awkwardness and self-consciousness. One may counter this forward

thrust by singing with mock-piety, but – as we witnessed with Auden, and with the half-incredulous, half-enticed Anna in *The Rainbow* – the posture of piety itself troubles the beginning and ending of 'mock'. In this passage from Stevie Smith's novel *The Holiday* (1949), for instance, is Celia being sincere or mocking? Are the two separable?

[redacted][55]

Celia fuses Reginald Heber's popular missionary hymn with part of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842), replacing the phrase 'golden sand' with 'something land'.[56] With the same rousing rhythm, one set of words seems as good as another. When Tiny reproves Celia for getting the words wrong, she does not back down, but 'sang the verse again more loudly'.[57] Celia is partly performing piety, stubbornly, and partly rebelling against her frustrating situation. This posture manages to be both sincere and mutinous: devotion just tipping over into aggression.

Such confused doubleness – devotion/aggression, sincerity/insincerity, pious posture/absurd words – underpins the capacity of hymn, in Lawrence's writing, to become a space of erotic potential. Anna and Will stand beside each other, visible to one another only peripherally, singing holy words but focused on each other. If the erotic is the sexual approached at a slant, indirectly – redirected into or through an adjacent medium – then hymn shoulders this work, several times, in Lawrence's poetry, sacrificing its own tangibility to enable an intense but socially sanctioned focus on the human body. Its inaudibility in these poetic instances contrasts with its solid presence in Lawrence's prose: allowing hymn to make itself more prominent in poetry, to which it is formally so similar, might tip the text too far towards

‘sincerity’, and elide the temporariness of the pious posture. In a variant of his poem ‘The Piano’, therefore, Lawrence silences hymn and transmutes it into flashes of light:

> The full throated woman has chosen a winning, living song
> And surely the heart that is in me must belong
> To the old Sunday evenings, when darkness wandered outside
> And hymns gleamed on our warm lips, as we watched mother's fingers glide.[58]

Hymn may be ‘winning, living’, but it earns no attention from Lawrence’s focalising narrator. Sight and touch, instead, collapse into something uncomfortably intimate. Though we do not hear the hymn, we feel the ‘warm[th]’, we see the ‘gleam’ and imagine the moisture it signifies. Though the line vanishes from the published version of ‘The Piano’, the same unusual construction (inaudible hymn, gleaming lips) happens in ‘In Church’:

> In the choir the boys are singing the hymn.
> The morning light on their lips
> Moves in silver-moist flashes, in musical trim.[59]

And yet again in *Sons and Lovers* (1913), as Paul encounters Miriam in church:

> … happening to go into the Unitarian Church one Sunday evening, when they stood up to sing the second hymn, he saw her before him. The light glistened on her lower lip as she sang. She looked as if she had got something, at any rate: some hope in heaven, if not in earth. Her comfort and her life seemed in the after-world. A warm, strong feeling for her came up.[60]

Lawrence does not illuminate face or head, angel-like, but the lips, and their messy, bodily moisture. The illuminated lips draw attention to the physical site of song: holy music made human and imperfect. Hymn, supposedly lifting its singers' minds to a better and heavenly world, re-situates attention away from itself, and God, on to its location in the body. In 'In Church', the spectator watches the flashing lips as though trying to decode a message flashed in Morse Code – but nothing is conveyed. Hymn becomes a kind of phatic communication, a pretext for erotic observation. It offers a displaced, but overwhelmingly sensory, experience: one seen and felt, rather than heard, operating through a kind of loss or backgrounding of the aural which one might expect to be most strongly experienced.

Strangely, then, hymn enables, in these twentieth-century writers, intense sensuous experiences, often quite apart from its own music or poetry. It offers a secure, containing space in which daydream, fantasy and erotic observation can freely occur. Beyond Lawrence and Smith, the trope is everywhere in literature of this period. Gumbril, the protagonist of Aldous Huxley's *Antic Hay* (1923), looks at the architecture of the church during the service, and plans his inventions, tuning into a line here and there, but mostly reminiscing about his childhood.[61] The same occurs in Evelyn Waugh's *A Handful of Dust* (1934): Tony relaxes into his own thoughts as soon as he hears the first bars of 'Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord …'[62] And in her short story 'In the Orchard' (1923), Virginia Woolf's protagonist Miranda actually sleeps as the strains of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* drift out of the church above her.[63] Hymn is not short of richness, but a displaced richness: its familiarity cues introspection, dreaminess and at times almost overwhelming sensuousness. All these depend, however, on hymn not being fully listened to or heard. Preserved with apparent

rigidity in literary texts, hymn acts as a reliable containing space in which consciousness can usefully wander.

*Containing Space*

In the hymn-singing episode of *The Rainbow*, Anna laughs helplessly at her cousin Will's singing. It does not matter; no one in the wider congregation really notices (until the hymn ends). Hymn, for Lawrence, offers a space where things can happen both openly, in public, and covertly: muffled by the singing of the crowd, a conspiratorial joke between two. What happens under the surface of hymn propels the plot, even as it passes below official notice.

Collective hymn-singing blurs a song, concealing the moments of jar which result from bad settings or bad singers. When Erik Routley calls hymns 'songs for unmusical people to sing together',[64] he points to the alchemy of congregational singing, where errors, flat notes and poor memories are transformed at best into beauty and at worst – not a very bad worst – into comedy. Hymn takes all comers; its sound words absorb mistakes, enclosing its singers safely. So Stevie Smith, even in her moment of righteous outrage about hymn-accuracy in her letter to Powys, is herself sometimes a little hazy on what 'really [comes] next' in hymns. Her rendition of 'Days and moments swiftly flying' turns the *abab* rhyme scheme of the original ('Days and moments quickly flying, / Blend the living with the dead; / Soon will you and I be lying / Each within our narrow bed'[65]) into something closer to a couplet. In her draft of 'The Necessity of Not Believing', she gives the hymn a jaunty *aaab* form:

[redacted][66]

These errors – like the hymn-concoction Celia sings in *The Holiday* – seem like parody, or an act of disrespect.[67] But getting the words of a hymn wrong in this way, or setting new words to hymn-tunes, in fact taps straight into hymn-tradition. The history of hymn has been one of compromise. In hymns' appeal to the unchurched, they became key to missionary outreach after the mid-century, identified by a catchy tune, simple verse and stirring chorus.[68] Hymns were written separately from their music, assigned to melodies which they more-or-less fitted. As a result, hymn words often sit awkwardly within their tunes, with syllables having to be strung out or skipped over. Far from being fixed or authoritative, hymn is always a botch-job, a pulling together of the disparate, a make-do and mend: 'patched up', as Eric Routley notes, by a series of writers, amenders, composers and setters.[69]

This sorry patchwork fades, in reception, into the background. On the face of it, hymn seems robust and reliable: something sturdy enough to withstand the test of time, the knockabout in the playground. When Smith scolds Inge for his irreverence, she is performing the outrage which Iona and Peter Opie identify in the four- or five-year-old child, infuriated by a misrecitation of the nursery rhymes which at that age seem, like hymns, to be inviolable and absolute.[70] But hymn's harlequin origins remain, available for anyone who wants to play. Despite her strong disapproval of Inge's 'wicked[ness]', Smith exploits hymn's openness to being misheard or misremembered. This is not a contradiction. It is the responsibility of hymn-book and clergyman to get the hymn right; secure in that certainty, it is the prerogative of the congregation member – even part, perhaps, of a posture of faith – to mumble, to make mistakes, to daydream.

Mistakes can be productive. For Louis MacNeice, reminiscing in *Modern Poetry* (1938), they offer interpretations:

> I pictured a small round hill, a desolately intense green (as green grass in Ireland can be desolate), very much like a mound in a field near my home called 'The Fairy Mount'. I thought that 'Without a city wall' meant that there was no wall round it, and this added to its treeless bleakness. 'He only can unlock the door' called up an actual door – I think with studs on it – like a church door.[71]

The words separate out into flashing images: stabbed out in the child's mind, like Miriam's distracted syllabic rendition in Richardson's *The Tunnel*. These images, redolent with emotions and mythic imagery (desolation, fairies, intensity), become the base on which MacNeice builds his poetic imagination. Lawrence's *Aaron's Rod* (1922) takes this personalisation of hymn into a private creative store further. Aaron's mishearing of a popular hymn by C. H. Gabriel, as a child,[72] offers him a framework for interpreting his experience years later, as he listens to Lady Franks playing on her Bechstein:

> Aaron seated himself on one of the chairs by the wall, to listen. Certainly it was a beautiful instrument. And certainly, in her way, she loved it. But Aaron remembered an anthem in which he had taken part as a boy.
>
> His eye is on the sparrow
> So I know he watches me.
>
> For a long time he had failed to catch the word *sparrow*, and had heard:
>
> His eye is on the spy-hole

So I know He watches me.

Which is just how it had all seemed to him, as a boy.

Now, as ever, he felt the eye was on the spy-hole. There sat the woman playing music. But her inward eye was on the spy-hole of her vital affairs – her domestic arrangements, her control of her household, guests and husband included. The other eye was left for the music, don't you know.[73]

Aaron's mishearing turns a metaphorical conclusion (if God watches sparrows he must watch me too) into an immanent, physical, more sinister one (God's eye is pressed right up against the spy-hole, watching me). He knows now that he misheard the hymn, mistook a sparrow for a spy-hole. But the misheard version persists, because it continues to offer a meaningful interpretative framework. Aaron feels the eye on the spy-hole 'Now, as ever'. The trope blurs and doubles, encompassing multiple concepts: the divine eye remains on the spy-hole, but now Lady Franks is absorbed into the metaphor. Aaron's implicit reasoning is irrefutable. If one eye is on the spy-hole, another must logically be left spare, to view other things. The misheard hymn offers, therefore, an outside eye and an inward eye, an official version of Lady Franks' attention and a covert, private version.

Here, hymn itself divides into two: one official and one private. The private does not, importantly, subvert, minimize or cancel the official version. Both describe God watching the singer: theologically, the compassion of the sparrow, and the sternness of the spy-hole, both have unimpeachable Biblical and hymnic pedigrees. What Aaron both describes and performs is hymn's doubleness of perspective. It accommodates a unique moment of slippage: a re-versioning which does not involve hostility. Hymn's fascination and value, here, inhere in its

capacity to be – like the figures in the Trinity – multiple things at once: father and son and holy ghost, sparrow and spy-hole. Such a moment of doubling offers a mode of literary allusion which embodies coexistence rather than pastiche or a draining-away of value from old things.

Hymn, then, becomes a site for the necessary and beneficial fragmentation of attention, where renegade and variant ways of thinking can be amply accommodated. In part, this is permissible because of hymn's unique congregational context. In the milling voices, no one will hear if you get the words wrong, sing spy-hole instead of sparrow. So Celia, in Smith's *The Holiday*, can botch the lyrics of hymn, singing vaguely 'the something land'; she does not need to know all the words, as the rest of the congregation can generally be relied on to conceal her loss of memory. The collective context of hymn forgives a multitude of sins. Smith describes in her essay 'Syler's Green: A Return Journey' (1947) how as a child she always decided which hymn she would sing before she got to church: '[redacted]'.[74] Hymns become part of the same aesthetic of not-quite knowing, of deliberately not probing too closely – not 'sounding' too thoroughly into events. The holes appear only when the hymn is heard clearly. In church, or chapel, under cover of the congregation's voices, no one will notice one small girl singing a carol on her own.

What hymn can perform in twentieth-century literature – startlingly – is an act of forgiveness: of error and weakness and wilfulness. Even as so many of the hymns that writers like Lawrence and Smith want to preserve thunder about punishment and fear, hymn's sound words prove themselves surprisingly flexible in these literary contexts. They have an almost physical 'give': they give up their claim to be fully listened to or believed, they forgive wayward congregation members and absorb their minor crimes. Far from being a space of

theological or interpersonal judgement, hymn in fact offers twentieth-century writing an occasion for the neutralisation of social embarrassment. Embarrassing enough on its own, hymn nevertheless enables a kind of safe absorption of alternity, of rupturing or socially dangerous episodes. Smith's renegade younger self can go on furtively singing her favourite carol, knowing that the chorus of hymn-singing voices will hide her; Lawrence's writing returns repeatedly to hymn-singing as a means of both evoking and concealing moments of social scandal. *The Boy in the Bush* (1924), which Lawrence co-wrote with M. L. Skinner, sees young Lennie save a funeral which was 'becoming a scandal' because of the feeble hymn-singing – and mortify his brother Tom at the same time – with his 'clear, pure singing, that seemed to dominate the whole wild bush.'[75] Similarly, in *The Rainbow*, Will's embarrassingly lusty singing is not audible to anyone but Anna. But nor, luckily, is her laughter audible during the hymn: the other singers drown it out, as they drown out Will's too-loud voice. Not until the hymn has ended and the sermon begun does Anna's laughter become shamefully apparent to the rest of the congregation.

Hymn has, therefore, a particular capacity – more than the church-space itself, or other parts of the service – to first evoke embarrassment, and then to secure it safely from notice. Two episodes from texts by George Orwell and Lawrence make this clear. In Orwell's *Burmese Days* (1934), Flory attends intermittently to a church service in Burma. Mainly, he gazes at Elizabeth across the aisle, imagining he can feel the warmth of her body, and dreaming of a life with her. The congregation sings hymns, with varying levels of enthusiasm and understanding: a 'queer, ragged noise'.[76] But disaster strikes during the sermon. Ma Hla May bursts into the church, screaming at Flory for ruining her. The sermon cannot survive this eruption as the empty, sound words of hymn might. 'The clergyman', Orwell tells us, 'brought [it] to an end almost at once. As soon as it was over Flory hurried outside, not

looking at any of the others.'[77] Sermons, unlike hymns, are still expected to be closely listened to: the incongruity of Ma Hla May's scandalous revelation, amidst these pious words, is too embarrassing for this sermon to recover from.

A very similar, but instructively different, episode occurs in Lawrence's short story 'The Last Straw'. Fanny and Harry are about to marry – but as Fanny sits in church, listening to Harry sing the solo parts of an anthem, Mrs Nixon stands up and denounces him, just before the choral finale. Lawrence describes what happens next:

> There was a minute of perfect silence and suspense… And then the tall, weird minister got to his feet, and in his strong, bell-like beautiful voice — the only beautiful thing about him — he said with infinite mournful pathos:
>
> 'Let us unite in singing the last hymn on the hymn-sheet; the last hymn on the hymn-sheet, number eleven.
>
> *"Fair waved the golden corn*
>
> *In Canaan's pleasant land."'*
>
> The organ tuned up promptly. During the hymn the offertory was taken. And after the hymn, the prayer.[78]

Lawrence quotes 'Fair waved the golden corn' in several places, including 'Hymns in a Man's Life' and his essay 'Climbing Down Pisgah'.[79] Erupting over and over again in different situations, here it materializes to absorb the social scandal which has just shaken the congregation. Hymn plods on, doggedly, through embarrassment and outrage. It matches the frequent tone-deafness of its singers with its own kind of tactful tone-deafness: not hearing or reacting to whispers, giggles, rebellious counter-singers or even dramatic accusations. The

harvest imagery of this hymn is inappropriate for this context – we already know that the weather has been wet, and the crops are in a 'poor way'[80] – but hymn's resistance to being heard with attention and comprehension at this time, privileging strident, repeated sound over sense, means that it can also roll up embarrassment into its own inescapable rhythm. Unable to be fully assimilated itself, hymn untethers social misbehaviour from its consequences, and stops it from being fully apprehended.

*Conclusion*

Characters and authors in the twentieth century flag up their failure to pay full attention to hymns. It is this escape from proper attention which gives hymn its potential as a literary episode. Its 'sound words' become simply sound, in the periphery of one's hearing, but easily invading spaces as needed: to muffle and absorb mischief, to offer a posture without feeling, and material for a barely comprehending imagination to operate on. And that mechanism, where imagination steps in to cover for something not fully grasped, underlies hymn's workings in twentieth-century literature. In *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), William James describes two processes which underpin attention. The first is the accommodation or adjustment of the sensory organs (focusing the eyes on a text, for instance) – another way, perhaps, of describing a posture enabling attentiveness. The second he describes as '*The anticipatory preparation from within of the ideational centres concerned with the object to which the attention is paid*'.[81] This is another way of saying 'imagination', a point which becomes clear when James addresses his own attention to two images which represent ambiguous forms. One can be seen either as a three-dimensional cube, or as a flat pattern of triangles and quadrilaterals, with a diamond in the centre. James writes how we 'can make the change from one apparent form to the other by imagining strongly in advance the form we

wish to see.'[82] Through an act of will, the diamond can become either the significant centrepiece of a flat image, or a substanceless overlap, a trick of the angle, as we view a transparent cube. This, I suggest, is how hymn works in twentieth-century literature. It looms in and out of vision: it can be willed into apparent three-dimensionality and 'sound' substance, and almost instantly dispatched again by a twitch of the mind. It heroically assumes its role as social shock-absorber, a role which takes up substance and space, and yet is materially identical with its own invisibility. The cube and the flat surface shimmer in and out of view.

In this flickering between substance and invisibility – acting as filler which moves, drastically, between being padding and being the thing itself – hymn says something important about faith in this period. Could faith be there and not there: flicker into complete substance when looked at a certain way, then vanish wholly into the background? Might this offer a way into thinking about certain authors in the period, such as Lawrence and Smith, whose relationships to their religious backgrounds were complex, only partly disowned, encrusted by contradictory claims about when and how they left their faiths? Hymn offers a certain response to faith at this time: as a territory in which free habitation and carefree abandonment coexist; where the posture or form exceeds the content and stands in for it without hypocrisy. Hymn-episodes are uninterested in the morality of hypocrisy, in fact, because hymn's resonant sounds, and soundness, offer the 'give' of forgiveness, absorbing the aural markers of human failure. Attending to literary hymn-episodes offers a route not only into a more nuanced view of these authors' relationship to authority and religion, but to the heart of their poetics and style: how they temper their own audibility, limit what a reader can perceive and muffle episodes of revelation. We may wish, I suggest, to listen more closely to the ways in which twentieth-century writers fail to listen to hymns.

[1] Dean Inge, 'Rock of Ages? Throw it out!', *Evening Standard*, 5 October 1951, 11.
[2] See her poem 'To Dean Inge Lecturing on Origen', where she refers to him as 'the wise man'. Stevie Smith, *Collected Poems and Drawings of Stevie Smith*, ed. Will May (London, 2015), 264.
[3] Stevie Smith, letter to John Cowper Powys, 5 November 1951, McFarlin Library, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, The University of Tulsa, Stevie Smith papers, 1924-1970, Coll. No. 1976.012, Series 1, Box 7, Folder 4.
[4] Inge is, admittedly, recycling an earlier trick; see William Ralph Inge, 'Schoolboy Stories' in *Lay Thoughts of a Dean* (New York and London, 1926), 264-71.
[5] Frances M. Yonge, *The Child's Christian Year: Hymns for Every Sunday and Holy-days, Compiled for the Use of Parochial Schools*, 4th edn (London, 1849), vii.
[6] James Joyce, *Stephen Hero* (London, 1956), 71.
[7] See, to name a few, Laurie Langbauer, *Novels of Everyday Life: The Series in English Fiction, 1850-1930* (Ithaca and London, 1999); Ben Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction* (London and New York, 2002); Siobhan Philips, *The Poetics of the Everyday: Creative Repetition in Modern American Verse* (New York, 2010); Michael Sayeau, *Against the Event: The Everyday and the Evolution of Modernist Narrative* (Oxford, 2013).
[8] Susan S. Tamke, *Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord: Hymns as a Reflection of Victorian Social Attitudes* (Athens, OH, 1978), 31.
[9] Tamke, *Joyful Noise*, 27.
[10] Susan Drain, *The Anglican Church in Nineteenth Century Britain: Hymns Ancient and Modern (1860-1875)* Texts and Studies in Religion, vol. 40 (Lewiston, Lampeter and Queenston, 1989), 4.
[11] Ian Bradley, *Abide with Me: The World of Victorian Hymns* (London, 1997), 208.
[12] Tamke, *Joyful Noise*, 2.
[13] Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, *British Hymn Books for Children, 1800-1900: Re-tuning the History of Childhood* (Farnham, 2016), 50-1.
[14] Heather Wiebe, *Britten's Unquiet Pasts: Sound and Memory in Postwar Reconstruction* (Cambridge, 2012), 176.
[15] W. H. Auden, 'Making, Knowing and Judging' in *The Dyer's Hand and other essays* (London, 1962), 31-60, 34.
[16] As late as October 1907, Lawrence was still extending the benefit of the doubt to the faith; a letter to Reverend Robert Reid, of 15 October 1907, requests to know 'what is precisely the orthodox attitude – or say the attitude of the nonconformist Churches to such questions as Evolution, with that the Origin of Sin, and as Heaven and Hell...I know these are tremendous issues, and somehow we hear of them almost exclusively from writers against Christianity.' D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume I 1901-13*, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge, 1979), 37.
[17] D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume V 1924-27*, ed. James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge, 1989), 634.
[18] D. H. Lawrence, 'Hymns in a Man's Life' in *Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. Anthony Beal (London, 1961), 6-11, 6.
[19] Duncan McGuffie, 'Lawrence and Nonconformity' in *D. H. Lawrence 1885-1930: A Celebration*, ed. Andrew Cooper (Nottingham, 1985), 31-8, 36.
[20] D. H. Lawrence, *Poems: Volume I*, ed. Christopher Pollnitz (Cambridge, 2013), 383; John Hoyles, *The Literary Underground: Writers and the Totalitarian Experience, 1900-1950* (London, 1991), 26.
[21] Lawrence, 'Hymns in a Man's Life', 6.
[22] Stevie Smith, 'At School' in *Me Again: The Uncollected Writings of Stevie Smith*, ed. Jack Barbera and William McBrien (London, 1981), 119-24, 120.
[23] Smith, *Collected Poems*, 390, 484.
[24] Smith, *Collected Poems*, 15.
[25] Rita Felski, *Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture* (London and New York, 2000), 90. See also Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, tr. Sacha Rabinovitch (London, 2000), 2, on Joyce's rescuing of the quotidian from anonymity, and Lorraine Sim, *Virginia Woolf: The Patterns of Ordinary Experience* (Farnham, 2010), 58, on Woolf's demands that her readers attend to aspects of ordinary experiences.
[26] Liesl Olson, *Modernism and the Ordinary* (New York, 2009), 18.
[27] John Whittier-Ferguson, 'Repetition, Remembering, Repetition: Virginia Woolf's Late Fiction and the Return of War', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 57 (2011), 230-53, 248.
[28] Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, ed. David Bradshaw (Oxford, 2006), 53.
[29] Dorothy Richardson, *Pilgrimage 2* (London, 1979), 229.

[30] Tim Rayborn, *A New English Music: Composers and Folk Traditions in England's Musical Renaissance from the Late 19th to the Mid-20th Century* (Jefferson, 2016), 59.
[31] Julian Onderdonk, 'Hymn Tunes from Folk Songs: Vaughan Williams and English Hymnody' in *Vaughan Williams Essays*, ed. Byron Adams and Robin Wells (Aldershot, 2003), 103-28, 103-4.
[32] Percy Dearmer, R. Vaughan Williams, Martin Shaw, *Songs of Praise* (London, 1925), iii.
[33] 'Preface' to *The BBC Hymn Book* (London, 1951), n. pag.
[34] Stevie Smith, 'The Necessity of Not Believing', *Gemini*, 5(1958), 19-32, 19-20.
[35] Oliver Sacks, *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain* (London, 2008), 45.
[36] Lawrence, 'Hymns in a Man's Life', 9.
[37] V. de Sola Pinto, 'Lawrence and the Nonconformist Hymns' in *A D. H. Lawrence Miscellany*, ed. Harry T. Moore (London, Melbourne and Toronto, 1961), 102-12, 108.
[38] J. R. Watson, *The English Hymn: A Critical and Historical Study* (Oxford, 1997), 2.
[39] Hallam Tennyson, *Tennyson: A Memoir* (London, 1899), 754.
[40] W. H. Auden, 'Postscript: Christianity and Art' in *The Dyer's Hand and other essays*, 456-61, 458.
[41] Inge, 'Rock of Ages?', 11.
[42] 'luscious, adj.'. OED Online (pubd online June 2017) accessed October 13, 2018.
[43] Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume V 1924-27*, 634.
[44] Louis MacNeice, *The Strings are False: An Unfinished Autobiography* (London, 1965), 54.
[45] W. H. Auden, 'Introduction' to John Betjeman, *Slick but Not Streamlined* (New York, 1947), 15.
[46] Ronald Firbank, *Valmouth* (London, 1977), 27.
[47] Auden, 'Introduction' to *Slick but Not Streamlined*, 9.
[48] BBC Arts, 'WH Auden and Stevie Smith in the pub in 1965' (pubd online October 2015) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p034md2x>, accessed 20 November 2017.
[49] Edward Nehls (ed.), *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, Volume One, 1885-1919* (Madison, 1957), 52. Richard Pogmore gives the date of this walk as 24 April 1905 (55).
[50] Edward Nehls (ed.), *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, Volume Three, 1925-1930* (Madison, 1959), 216-17.
[51] On the difference between belief or reason as an intellectual acceptance of a set of statements, and faith as a habit which must be 'train[ed]' (perhaps like a set of muscles), see C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London, 2012), 138-41.
[52] G. K. Chesterton, 'In Defence of Nonsense' in *The Defendant*, ed. Dale Ahlquist (Mineola, NY, 2012), 24-9, 28.
[53] D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, ed. Mark Kinkead-Weekes (Cambridge, 1989), 103.
[54] Quoted in Tamke, *Joyful Noise*, 25.
[55] Stevie Smith, *The Holiday* (London, 1979), 6.
[56] 'Heber', significantly, is the name not only of the hymn's writer, but of Celia's uncle: a vicar, whom they spend most of the novel visiting. In this text, hymn-culture penetrates even into Smith's naming of characters.
[57] Smith, *Holiday*, 6.
[58] D. H. Lawrence, *The Complete Poems of D. H Lawrence: Volume Two*, ed. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (London, 1972), 958.
[59] Lawrence, 'In Church' in *Poems: Volume I*, 108.
[60] D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*, ed. Helen and Carl Baron (Cambridge, 1992), 457.
[61] Aldous Huxley, *Antic Hay* (London, 1928), 11.
[62] Evelyn Waugh, *A Handful of Dust* (London, 1948), 28.
[63] Virginia Woolf, 'In the Orchard' in *A Haunted House: The Complete Shorter Fiction* (London, 2003), 143-5, 143.
[64] Eric Routley, *Christian Hymns Observed* (London and Oxford, 1983), 1.
[65] *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (London, 1904), 374.
[66] Stevie Smith, 'The Necessity of Not Believing', 2, University of Tulsa, Stevie Smith Papers, Series 2, Box 3, Folder 15.
[67] On the parodic capacity of hymn-reworkings, see Janet Montefiore, *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s: The dangerous flood of history* (London and New York, 1996), 131.
[68] Tamke, *Joyful Noise*, 5.
[69] Eric Routley, *The English Carol* (London, 1958), 151.
[70] Iona & Peter Opie, *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren* (Oxford, 1959), 90.
[71] Louis MacNeice, *Modern Poetry* (Oxford, 1938), 38.
[72] See Kalnins' note in D. H. Lawrence, *Aaron's Rod*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge, 1988), 322.
[73] Lawrence, *Aaron's Rod*, 175.
[74] Stevie Smith, 'Syler's Green: A Return Journey' in *Me Again*, 83-99, 95.
[75] D. H. Lawrence and M. L. Skinner, *The Boy in the Bush*, ed. Paul Eggert (Cambridge, 1990), 186.

[76] George Orwell, *Burmese Days* (London, 1934), 271.
[77] Orwell, *Burmese Days*, 274.
[78] D. H. Lawrence, 'The Last Straw' in *England, My England and Other Stories*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge, 1990), 153-66, 162.
[79] D. H. Lawrence, 'Climbing Down Pisgah' in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Herbert (Cambridge, 1988), 225-9, 227.
[80] Lawrence, 'The Last Straw', 160.
[81] William James, *The Principles of Psychology: Volume I* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1981), 411.
[82] James, *Principles of Psychology*, 418.